

# **EXHIBIT E**



## ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL

March 2, 2016

Dear Alumni,

Last night as Liesbeth and I were walking back from the Dining Hall, we looked across Library Pond and saw light shining through the once-bricked-up windows of Hargate. It was a sight the School had not seen in decades. As I gazed at the reflection in the now-unfrozen pond, I wondered how soon before photographers would discover this recovered view.

Hargate's transformation into a community center provides an apt metaphor for much of what we have accomplished this year in general and in this Winter Term, in particular, as we adapt to address the present and future needs of St. Paul's students. I am hopeful that we will see similar transformations this spring in Moore as it becomes a better-equipped home for our fine arts program, and in the Freeman Center, with its more accessible and teaching-friendly gallery.

Progress is also underway in less visible, but even more important, ways. As I write this letter, I have just read an article, written by Todd Purdum '78, which appears in the March issue of *Vanity Fair* and purports to examine the culture of our school, as prompted by the sexual assault trial last year. **I was disappointed that the article did not highlight the real story at St.**

**Paul's, namely:** the many steps we have taken in the last 20 months to improve the School through our building healthy community initiatives; the ways in which helping adolescents learn from their mistakes in an increasingly complex world; and the fact that our students, collectively, comprise a community of highly supportive, caring, and respectful young men and women. As you know, our focus has always been and will remain on making St. Paul's the safest and healthiest learning environment possible. The systems and curricula in place are directed entirely toward achieving this end.

This winter, for example:

- The Discipline Review Team, a committee composed of faculty and students, completed its year-long work of proposing enhancements to our disciplinary system. One change will provide a structure for addressing

violations of School expectations that do not warrant a convening of the Disciplinary Committee. The other, perhaps more significant, change is grounded on a model of restorative justice, a philosophy that allows us not only to address the failings of the individual but also to make clear to that student the impact of hurtful behaviors on others. This system of accountability is intended to address difficult situations beyond the practice of individual punishment, as it also involves the repairing of relationships that have suffered through the injurious actions of one or more students. The faculty will discuss this proposal when we return from Spring Vacation.

- A task force consisting of faculty, students, trustees, and parents is underway to review our residential advising system. While we believe our current house-based approach to advising is strong, we are eager to collect and analyze important data to see if we are doing all that we can to support our students in the most developmentally appropriate ways. The task force will present its findings and recommendations to me at the end of the Spring Term. Chad Green, the chair of this task force, will be asking for input about advising from all parents in the coming months.
- Another task force that includes representation from the student body, staff, faculty, and trustees is examining gender equity at all levels of the School – from the experiences of students, staff, and faculty to the leadership of the School. The task force's charge is to inquire thoughtfully and candidly into how women and men, young and old, students and employees, experience the School through the lens of gender. It will ask this central question: How fully are we living into a healthy co-educational environment? This comprehensive work will continue through the spring, culminating in the fall of 2016 with a report of findings and recommendations to me and the faculty.
- Importantly, other efforts in community-building are ongoing. Central themes of our programming continue to be bystander training and the work of reminding students of what they learned growing up in their homes – that relationships based on mutual respect are the healthy and normal ones. We have seen many examples of our students feeling empowered to stand up for justice and to celebrate the many wonderful, often simple, but powerful ways in which our students are celebrating their best selves. The LINC curriculum has expanded into the Fifth and Sixth Forms, continuing an examination of sex and sexuality, most recently

inspired by a presentation from Cindy Pierce, a visiting social/sexuality educator. She prompted vibrant conversations about social media, mutual respect, personal integrity, and consent.

As we approach spring, we are looking forward to Alan Berkowitz and Helen Stubbs '87 returning to the School to train student leaders on how to advance and support appropriate behaviors among their fellow students and we will be administering the Independent School Health Survey, which "addresses attitudes, life experiences, and issues such as self-esteem, stress, integrity, sexual behavior and substance use." We will use data collected from this survey to inform future programming and curricula.

I am very excited about the early response from peer schools to our June 15 to 17 symposium: "Empathy, Intimacy and Technology in a Boarding School Environment." The distinguished faculty joining us will surely provoke important dialogue, out of which I am most eager to capture and disseminate a framework that will benefit all schools (and parents) who are interested in learning more about the impact technology is having on adolescent relationships. You can learn more about the symposium [here](#). Importantly, I am pleased to report that, in these final days of our admission process for the coming year, Dean of Admission Scott Bohan '94 informs me that our application numbers are among the highest in St. Paul's history and he predicts our selectivity to be between 12 and 15 percent. Scott remarked that, "We are seeing smart, remarkably diverse, capable students who will become great members of our School community." And, we are very proud about our \$10.5M financial aid budget, which is devoted to achieving the goal of providing grants to at least 40 percent of our student body. Much of our admission success this year and in years past is a reflection of the warmth and enthusiasm exhibited by our students when they meet their prospective peers visiting the School for interviews.

As you can see, there is building of various kinds happening throughout the School – and all of it, both concrete and intangible, is in the interest of constructing and enhancing community. As always, I am grateful to my colleagues for advancing this important work, to our parents for entrusting their children to us, and to you for your support of our School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Hil' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Michael G. Hirschfeld '85, P'14,'17

325 Pleasant Street, Concord, New Hampshire 03301-2591  
603-229-4801 [www.sps.edu](http://www.sps.edu)

August 18, 2015

Dear SPS Alumni,

Yesterday, I wrote to SPS students and parents about the Owen Labrie trial and resulting extensive media coverage. I want to share that letter with you.

Please do not hesitate to contact the School with your questions and concerns. I am extending the School's resources to you in the event you are contacted by the media. Any media inquiries may be directed to Sarah Aldag, our director of communications at 603-229-4676 or [saldag@sps.edu](mailto:saldag@sps.edu).

I hope that the waning days of summer continue to be restorative and full of family and friends.

Sincerely,



Mike Hirschfeld

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ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL

October 28, 2015

Dear Alumni and Parents,

Yesterday morning in Chapel, I spoke to students and faculty about tomorrow afternoon's sentencing hearing. I encouraged them to be respectful of each other and the diversity of emotions this will bring forth in the community. I also reminded them that the hearing will likely draw local and national media attention to the School. I write to make you aware of this reality.

As many of you know, the issue of sentencing in this case has become controversial, specifically as to what constitutes a fair and just sentence. Given the gravity of the case and the difficult questions it has raised, this is not surprising. The School will comment extensively on the sentencing. Our energy continues to be focused on supporting our students, faculty, and staff.

We can expect extensive media coverage as the legal process concludes, and unfortunately, the narrative the media will pursue will be its own. Although we have provided facts, perspective, and comments, our content has not always been included and the resulting coverage has often been flawed. It is frustrating that our School has been portrayed inaccurately based on an isolated incident. As many of you can attest and as our current students can affirm – those reports are in direct contrast to the environment here. We will continue to use this painful experience as an opportunity strengthen our already strong community.

We have always been committed to teaching our students our core values – that they live honorably, respectfully, and never forget to be kind.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MH', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Michael G. Hirschfeld '85, P'14,'17

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## Fall Convocation 2015

9/15/2015

by Rector Michael G. Hirschfeld '85

### Audio Version

Good morning.

I love this time of year and I always have. It is the season of hope in schools everywhere. I remember late-summer goal-setting when I was a student here: I will go to math extra help more often, I will write more articles for *The Pelican*, I will be a leader in my dorm, get an HH in English 4, do all that I can to make the soccer team, and so on. I suspect some of you have gone through a similar mental exercise these last few weeks.

Then, some years later, when I taught Humanities here, preparing for the year brought me a different level of anxiety, good anxiety, but anxiety nonetheless. I struggled with the fact that there was seemingly no end to preparing for classes and the year. There was always something else to read, or to re-read, or to consider in getting ready. The first day of classes brought some – but not complete – relief from this anxiety. I suspect some of my teaching colleagues are feeling this way today.

I spent a good deal of this summer thinking about the start of this School year. As usual, I went through a goal-setting exercise with colleagues and some members of the Board of Trustees, but this year, more than ever, I have been thinking about the tone of the start of the year. More specifically, how I would convey to you how proud I am of you and this School. We all know how extraordinarily difficult the court trial in August was for the community – a painful and sad moment in what has been for many of us more than 15 months of pain and sadness. As I have told the Sixth Form and student leaders, while we will continue to learn and grow from the experience, I am eager, very eager, to more fully restore our joy – a hallmark of St. Paul's School.

As wrenching an experience as it was, the trial provides us with a rare opportunity to think about the most important kind of teaching and learning we aspire to do here. Yesterday, prefects, LinC leaders, heads of house, and advisers led us in this teaching and learning process that will continue.

In the introduction to his recent book, *The Road to Character*, David Brooks draws a distinction between "resume virtues" and "eulogy virtues." He defines resume virtues as "the skills you bring to the job market and that contribute to external success." By contrast Brooks describes eulogy virtues as those "that get talked about at your funeral, the ones that exist at the core of your being – whether you are kind, brave,



honest or faithful; what kind of relationships you formed.” I like to think we are a eulogy virtues school. I would also like to think you chose to come to St. Paul’s because you recognized it for that quality – as a eulogy virtues school, where character and community count above all else.

I will not bore you with a full account of Brooks’ book, beyond this: Brooks focuses on the stories of six people of high character, Frances Perkins, Dwight Eisenhower, Dorothy Day, George Marshall, A. Philip Randolph, and Augustine. While Brooks focuses on their achievements and character, the linking theme of each biography, of each road to character, is on their humanity – on their imperfections, on their personal failures, and importantly, on the ability of each to confront his or her own weaknesses and failures – and understanding them as opportunities for real growth. This, in my view, is the thesis of Brooks’ work, that character, the living of eulogy virtues, comes not only through further cultivation of our strengths, but even more through a deeper recognition of our weaknesses. I would take Brooks’ argument one step further and add that such deep learning starts from a place of humility, an understanding that all of us can, and do fail.

I was reminded of Brooks’s book this weekend when I was reading another small book given to me by an alumnus last spring – *Knowledge without Goodness Is Dangerous: Moral Education in Boarding Schools*. Sounds like a real pager turner doesn’t it? Mr. Pratt, Mr. Parker Chase, Mr. Patenotte, Dr. Reider, Mr. Smith, Mr. Gordon, Dr. de Greef, and others familiar with Phillips Exeter Academy will recognize that the title of this book comes from John Phillips and the Original Deed of Gift of Phillips Exeter Academy. The book is a collection of essays and reflections on a symposium of the same name held at Exeter in 1978. The symposium was attended by many boarding school administrators from across the country, including two from St. Paul’s: Chaplain Alden Flanders and Vice Rector Thomas Quirk. Mr. Quirk was the dean of students when I was here as a student, and he could be the subject of another Chapel reflection, but let me just say that standing at 6 feet 6-inches tall, Mr. Quirk puts the current mantra of “fear the beard” into perspective.

The symposium was essentially about the ways in which various schools approached the teaching of virtue. How best to teach students to be and do good, a question good schools – including this one – continually ask themselves. Since this school’s founding, our mission has been to develop in our students, in you, a commitment to serving the greater good. You might imagine there were as many approaches to teaching virtue as there were participants in the gathering. Mr. Quirk and Rev. Flanders made the argument that this Chapel, our Episcopal tradition, and importantly, our regular

meeting here help us in our teaching of virtue. I share this view, but I would like to qualify it slightly.

Today we heard the story of the Good Samaritan, the archetypal Christian story of actively doing the right thing when doing nothing is often the easier thing to do. The Good Samaritan is an early example of the ideal community member – one who not only understands the right thing to do in the service of another, but has the courage to *do* it. The story of the Good Samaritan is an example of the teaching that occurs when we gather here in Chapel – you are presented with a lesson about a virtue or virtues – whether the lesson comes from Christianity, another faith tradition, philosophy, poetry, or some other text. We hear these lessons every time we meet in this space. And this is good. I will confess though, that as a learner this kind of teaching often falls short for me. (Yes, there is irony in the fact that I am offering you such a lesson this morning). And yes, I am inspired by the story of the Good Samaritan. But does that inspiration (as often as I may have heard the story) really translate into my living more virtuously? I would like to think so, but I honestly don't know. I do know there is value to thinking on these things, but how does virtuous thought actually *translate* into moral action?

I would like to suggest this morning that there is more teaching and learning opportunity in *doing* these things than there is in just *thinking* on them.

Two weeks ago when the faculty and staff convened in this space to kick off the school year, I asked them to consider the trial and the media's portrayal of the School – as sensationalist and inaccurate as that portrayal often was – as an invitation to recommit ourselves to modeling our core values of living honorably and never forgetting to be kind, especially, as in today's Good Samaritan story, when kindness means stopping in our constant hurry and taking the time to try to ease someone else's burden.

Understanding that we are all teachers when it comes to virtue, I would like to extend that invitation to students as well as adults: that we recommit to living the values we promise each other in the Honor Code and in the School Prayer. As our year together begins, it is the perfect time of year to do this, to consider how each of us can make this great school even better, a place where our greatest success comes from the good we strive to do for others.

Earlier I mentioned some of my late-summer ambitions as a kid when school was about to start. Well I earned an H in English 4 – and I was lucky to do it – and I wasn't able to achieve everything else I was aiming for either. What I *did* come away with though was something else from my teacher, Ms. Chant, whose example as a truly good person has been something I've remembered ever since.

Returning to the role of the Chapel in our shared life. While the teaching of sacred texts and the musings of speakers provide us with ample food for moral thought, it is our presence here together that reminds us to behave responsibly in our *own* actions and also to help guide others in our *shared* responsibilities. We literally face each other in this space in love and importantly, in support of one another. I will stumble in my effort to live more fully into our School virtues and so will you. But, we have little to fear in our failure if we trust one another in our common life.

I could not be more proud, happy, and excited about being a member of this community with you at this moment in time. I seem to have many favorite days every year, but this is the best, seeing you all here in this one place, watching as you connect with old friends and meet new ones, to start new explorations, to be part of all it means to be here together. This is our School.

It is going to be a great year.

### **2014 Family Weekend Remarks**

10/27/2014

*Rector Michael G. Hirschfeld '85*

*October 25, 2014*

*The Chapel of St. Peter and St. Paul*

Good morning. It is my pleasure to welcome you back to the School. I hope you enjoyed last night's performances and more importantly have enjoyed re-connecting with your children. I also hope you are well rested for the busy day that lies before you. I feel remarkably privileged to be doing what I am doing at the School – to have a literal front row seat to watch our students, your children, variously grow, inspire, challenge, and ultimately become. I hope you witness a small part of this magic this weekend.

I made the observation earlier this week that for a number of you this is your fourth and final Family Weekend at St. Paul's School. It wasn't lost on me either that four years ago I outlined my vision for what I hoped the School would do and become during my tenure as rector. Not just for the benefit of the members of the four-year club, but for all of you, I thought I would take a moment to offer you a "state of the union" of sorts on where I think we are on some of my aspirations for the School. I will try to do all of this efficiently, knowing how understandably grumpy the faculty can get when

Chapel runs late and classes do not start on time. And also that I stand before you and another cup of coffee

Nearly five years ago I decided to enter the search to become the School's 13<sup>th</sup> rector because I was inspired by what the School was at the time, but more so, frankly, for what I felt it could become. My vision for the School has been centrally focused on instilling in the culture of the School, to borrow from Stanford psychologist Carol Dwek, a growth mindset making sure we are always actively seeking the best ways to teach our students in all areas of our program: to measure our teaching against their learning – to make more systemic and rigorous institutional introspection and improvement.

I had some very strong opinions about some of the obstacles that I felt stood in the way of making the School a better learning environment. Some of you will remember our various experiments with the daily schedule—some have been more successful than others. Under the leadership of our dean of studies, Alisa Barnard, we continue to tweak the schedule in an effort to make more room for reflection and rest. If you are a careful student of the academic calendar, you will see this year, for example, we are using more Saturdays for non-academic programming, allowing for something that looks more like a "real weekend." Okay, that might be a stretch. Obviously, time remains a challenge for this community.

Another hope I expressed was that the School be much more intentionally engaged in wider dialogues about secondary school education, as an institution that has much to contribute to that dialogue and also as one that would gain much from it. The School has benefitted greatly from our relationship with the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education and our deepening connections with other schools and consortia, including the Center for the Study of Boys' and Girls' Lives.

Three years ago I asked Michael Spencer, dean of Chapel, and Tim Pratt, dean of college advising, to lead a strategic planning effort to make operational our shared hopes for the School. They did a wonderful job of synthesizing input from faculty, staff, students, parents, and alumni to draw a roadmap for the School's immediate and middle-distant future. The plan, *A Strategic Vision: Education toward a Greater Good* is worth reading if you haven't read it already. It outlines four broad initiatives that we have been pursuing since its adoption by the board of trustees in May of 2013: Deepening a Culture of Innovation, Advancing Teaching and Learning, Fostering

Leadership, Community and Character, and Ensuring Access and Financial Sustainability. I would like to highlight a few of the things we are undertaking:

In the area of deepening a culture of innovation we have developed and will roll out in the fall of 2015 trans-disciplinary courses in humanities and in biology and humanities and dance. We are also piloting an engineering honors program this year, examining the structure of both this program and the classical honors program with an eye to creating a template for the possible creation of more honors programs. We have also hired an instructional designer, new faculty member Melissa Poole, to make sure we are not missing opportunities to effectively use technology in our teaching.

Concerning the initiative of advancing teaching and learning we are developing a program that includes institutional research, student support, and professional development, which we are hopeful will physically live in a center for the advancement of teaching and learning in Ohrstrom Library. I am particularly excited about enhancing our existing partnership with the University of Pennsylvania and the creation of a summer institute for teaching as well as a mid-career master's in teaching program—programs that will not only benefit St. Paul's School, but also other public and independent schools.

Fostering Leadership, Community and Character is arguably our most pressing and important strategic initiative. We are in the process of creating a curriculum-wide program for character development. Much of this work will involve connecting and better synthesizing and integrating our current efforts. Supporting our youngest students and training them will be a particular focus of this work.

In the area of ensuring Access and Financial Sustainability the plan called for, and we accomplished thanks to many of you, the completion of the campaign for St. Paul's School fully one year ahead of schedule, raising over \$178 million against a goal of \$175 million. Last month the Board of Trustees approved two important measures that I believe will substantially enhance the experience of our children: 1) we will be reducing the School's enrollment from a high of 548 last fall to 522 in the fall of 2015 and 2) the board approved a substantial increase in financial aid to enhance our reach to families for whom a full St. Paul's School tuition is unaffordable.

The strategic plan also called for the revision of the School's master plan—a document that guides our development of the School's buildings and grounds. As approved by the



Board, these revisions include important and in some cases long overdue improvements to the physical plant. My hope for these important projects is that we can repurpose existing buildings to make these programmatic changes, working to make these projects have as little environmental impact as possible. Specifically, the plan calls for the movement of the fine arts program into what has become the academic quad created by the Lindsay Center; by repurposing Moore, the former mathematics building; by converting Hargate into a true community center or commons that will be a place for all members of the community to gather and interact; and by moving the art gallery into a renovated Freeman Center—a space that has been only modestly successful as a student center.

We have been busy executing our strategic plan—leaning into our planned, intentional future.

But sometimes schools, even this school, do not follow plans. Sometimes the course we charted through extensive planning is altered, and our examination of fundamental assumptions about how we operate is undertaken more reactively. The allegation of sexual assault at the School last spring has provided us with an important opportunity to re-consider elements of our shared life that do not appear in our strategic plan. We are asking ourselves important questions: How strong are the relationships between adults and students in this unique model that depends so heavily on their health? How well are we supporting students who want to stand up for the values we instilled in them as their parents and we espouse as a school? How well are we addressing issues of hierarchy and gender equity in the student culture? Does our system of discipline support students who stumble as well as students who make better choices? Are we doing all that we can to support the transmission of the healthiest aspects of student culture? Are we confronting the transmission of unhealthier elements of student culture as effectively as we could? Critical questions all. Questions we should be asking ourselves continuously.

While this kind of reactive introspection is as expansive as it is disquieting for the community, it will ultimately lead to making this a better school. Of this I am certain. Our challenge, certainly one that I have wrestled with since last June, is not only to ask these critical questions but also to answer them; to answer them in a way that is not only mindful of all that we are doing well as a community (and there is much we are doing extremely well as a community) but also supportive of those things that make this a wonderfully distinctive community. I am tremendously confident of our success in

this work because of the gifts of our faculty and their extraordinary commitment to this endeavor and, importantly, because of the ever-evident character of your children.

Again, it has been a joy to witness the growth of your children this fall and always.

In your brief time here this weekend I hope you will join me in thanking and celebrating the faculty and staff of St. Paul's for supporting your children so selflessly.

Have a great weekend.

[BACK](#)



9/27/2014

*Rector Michael G. Hirschfeld*

*September 27, 2014*

*The Chapel of St. Peter and St. Paul*

Welcome home. It has been wonderful seeing and speaking with so many of you over the weekend. I hope you have enjoyed your time back at the School. And that the weekend has stirred in you some sense of your experience at this home—likely one of many homes you’ve had in your lifetime.

At the end of the summer I returned to my childhood home in Cheshire, Connecticut. I went back with my older brother, Rob, on the sad of occasion of our father’s rapidly declining health. Between one of our visits to see our father in the hospital we took the time to walk around our old neighborhood—a collection of suburban homes built in the late 60s. As we walked, we named every family and their children (our contemporaries) who lived in the 30 or so homes we passed. We could and did note the individual gifts those families and their children brought to our lives growing up there in the 70s. We also recalled specific, powerful memories of how we interacted with one another. While we didn’t name it during our literal walk around the block, what Rob and I were really talking about was living in community those years ago. It was a community that was created out of geographic and to a certain extent socio-economic circumstances—not to underestimate the values that may have connected us, but if you could afford a \$45,000 home in 1970 you could belong to our neighborhood community. It was a wonderful place to grow up, but it couldn’t be described as an intentional community.

St. Paul’s School, of course, *is* an intentional community. This isn’t news to any of us, I know, but I hope you have witnessed some of our intention this weekend. An overt, perhaps over-stated, intention is to make sure we are providing our students with the very best classroom experience—an experience grounded in the philosophy that learning should be student-centered. I suspect the phrase “student-centered learning” sounds and feels like obvious, redundant educational jargon to some of you here this evening—in some ways it also does to me. The phrase describes our effort to better understand our students as learners—in the most concrete ways and in subtler ways too.

As obvious as this might seem, it actually signals a paradigm shift in education, based on research and practice. Consider your own secondary school education here or elsewhere. I would posit that much of your conscious or subconscious energy was spent trying to figure out how you would learn from your teachers or what your teachers might have “wanted” or “been looking for.” Your teacher’s energy was most likely focused on his or her own content mastery and delivery of that content to you—his or her teaching, maybe not *your learning*. Our focus now is certainly on the highest-quality teaching, but only as it relates to maximizing learning. Today I hope you saw some very practical applications of this approach in the brain science presentation by Andrew Watson, our dean of teaching and curriculum, Lawrence Smith, and science teacher Julie Cepiel. Yes, our faculty is taking on the daunting work of trying to understand how the adolescent brain works. They are remarkably talented.

While understanding our students as classroom learners is important, it is more important to extend this effort to more deeply understanding them as social beings in this particular age so that we can continue to advance the noblest intentions of this community. The allegation of a sexual assault here last spring and the subsequent media coverage of it reminded me, as I suspect it reminded you, of the School’s fundamental calling—to do good. Not to do good when it is convenient—but to do good as the Good Samaritan does it in today’s reading—by reaching out and maybe even putting oneself in harm’s way to do it.

I spent my summer thinking about our calling, our mission, as a school. I was searching for answers to questions I had about our community and the raising of adolescents—questions about what we strive to do here and how successful we are or are not in this work. One of the places to which I turned for answers was the writing of Samuel S. Drury. As many of you know, Dr. Drury was the Rector of the School from 1911 to 1938 and had, and continues to have in my view, an enormous impact on the School. One of the qualities I most admire about Drury which is both a function of his personality and his era is his certainty. Drury was a person of certainty, and I was looking for certainty this summer. It was within this context that I read his *Fathers and Sons*, an instruction manual of sorts for family life “as it was supposed to be” in the early 20th century.

Drury’s book, not so surprising in hindsight, did not provide all of the guidance I was seeking, but it gave me one timeless bit of wisdom I would like to share with you now. I

shared these same words with faculty and staff at the start of the school year. Drury writes:

*Our day seems the wildest page in human history. Was there ever such an unfortunate time to bring up children! Oh for the good old days, the quiet simple protected days of long ago. Do you think they really existed? Do you suppose that the social fabric of the eighteenth century, for example, was less menacing than that of the twentieth? The fact is that the moral arena of human character has always wild beasts in it. At any stage of history the adversary takes varied forms, but the forces of evil are no cleverer today than they were in Galilee two thousand years ago, or in any century since. Youth has ever been beset, and has always been empowered to win. (Drury, Fathers and Sons, 80)*

St. Paul's School has never been impermeable to the wild beasts of the real world. It would be a mistake to believe it is now or ever was. Recognizing this reality and using it to teach our students is one of our most sacred responsibilities.

More interesting and certainly more inspiring in my view is Drury's faith in adolescents—I love this line—*Youth has ever been beset, and has always been empowered to win*. You can hear the certainty—the confidence—in Drury's voice, can't you?*Youth has ever been beset, and has always been empowered to win*.

I'll confess that I do not share Drury's faith in youth's ability to overcome the challenges the world presents. To be clear I am not less confident that youth *can* improve the world, only less confident that they can do it alone. This is the work we, St. Paul's School, are called to do—to give our students not only the skills to win against whatever the "wild beast" of the day may be, but also to ground those skills in moral confidence, moral confidence that will empower our students to actively do good.

Some of you shared with me David Brooks's September 8 *New York Times* column, "Becoming a Real Person." In his column Brooks debates the purpose of higher education, specifically asking the question of whether or not moral education is a legitimate aim of colleges and universities in the 21st century. It is an interesting short piece which for me highlighted *our* mission. To borrow a phrase from Brooks, ours is the work of soul-building, nothing less.

Ours is not the work of slaying every wild beast at once; it *is* to confront those that venture here and, by accumulative effect, one soul at a time, the School will change the world. This has been and will remain our intention

9/8/2014

*Rector Michael G. Hirschfeld '85*

*Remarks at Fall Convocation*

*The Chapel of St. Peter and St. Paul*

*September 8, 2014*

Good morning. It is great to see you all here. I have been waiting for this, the real start of the school year for some time. It was wonderful to see so many of you over the weekend. But it is even better to be together in this space on this beautiful day.

I would like to spend my time with you this morning sharing three reflections from my experiences this summer to frame my hopes for the School this year.

The first reflection comes from a dinner I had this summer with my Algebra II teacher when I was a student here, Mr. Chase. Mr. Chase is the father of Mr. George Chase, the humanities teacher. My family was having dinner with the Chases when I remembered this about my former teacher. Actually, I remembered several things about Mr. Chase – that he was an incredibly patient and kind teacher, one who respected and cared for kids in a no-nonsense, not very flashy way. I remembered spending a good deal of time getting extra math help from him before Chapel in the math building, when we had such a thing. He was very generous. I also remembered the rumor then that Mr. Chase was a talented athlete as a younger man. When I returned to teach here I learned that the rumor was true – that he had played hockey at Harvard and scored the very first goal in the history of the Bean Pot hockey tournament. In the college hockey world this is a big deal. In these ways the younger Mr. Chase isn't so different from his father.

But what I remember most about Mr. Chase actually has nothing to do with his ability as a classroom teacher or as an athlete. What I remembered after our dinner together this summer was this – at various moments, at truly random times when I was a student here, I would see Mr. Chase bend down and pick up litter on the grounds – gum and candy wrappers, popsicle and lollipop sticks, apple cores, orange peels; you

name it, he would pick it up and throw whatever it was away. I am sure he did this all the time, but what I most clearly remember was Mr. Chase doing this when no one was near him – when no one was watching – when *he must have known* no one was watching. This is self-incriminating, but I used to see him do this when I was looking out the window daydreaming in class. I specifically remember watching him pick up trash as I sat in my Spanish class with Sra. Kelly on the first floor of the Schoolhouse. (With apologies to Sra. Kelly, I may not have been the only student looking out the window).

The second reflection comes from a conversation I had with another head of school this summer – the head of a school much like ours. We were talking generally about our schools and the challenges we face in educating you in this particular moment in history – in this particular age. He told me a story about a conversation he had last spring with one of his students about what he believed was her inappropriate use of technology. It had come to the attention of the head of school that the student had posted something offensive about another student or the school. The subject is actually immaterial. When the headmaster asked the student if she had written what was posted she said, “That wasn’t really me; that was me on Facebook.”

My final reflection from the summer comes from a visit I had with an alumnus named Kiril Sokoloff of the Form of 1965. I met Mr. Sokoloff with Mr. Kissick to thank him for creating the Kiril and Kate Sokoloff Prize. The prize offers grants to students to pursue service projects. There are actually winners of this prize among us this morning – Sixth Formers Eva Wang, Cat Etchart, and Serena Doubleday. You will hear more about the Kate and Kiril Sokoloff Prize later in the year.

I believe Mr. Sokoloff is a wonderful example of someone who strives to live the mission of St. Paul’s School. He is actively interested in making the world a kinder, more humane place. He is a fascinating person. I hope someday he will come to the School again and speak to you. I believe you would find him as inspiring as I do.

After our lunch, Mr. Sokoloff gave Mr. Kissick and me a short tour of his home in Sun Valley, Idaho. He first stopped to show us a framed quote on a bookshelf. The quote was from the theologian John Wesley, and you heard it moments ago as today’s opening sentence. It is worth rereading: “Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all

the people you can. As long as ever you can." Mr. Sokoloff would call this quote his personal mission statement.

Today is the first day of the School year. And is it most appropriate to pause and think about how we will live together this year. A wonderful thing about this community is that it is dynamic and ever-refreshing. On Friday we welcomed over 130 new students into this community and two weeks ago several new faculty and staff members who will have an immensely positive impact on the School.

Each year presents us with opportunity for introspection and improvement as individuals and collectively as a community. I believe the energy we feel at the beginning of a new year is fueled mostly by the promise of this improvement and our hope of good things to come – again, both as individuals and as a community. When I was a student here it was a perennial late summer ritual of mine to think about what I wanted to achieve and more importantly about what kind of person I wanted to be in this community in the coming year. I still do this. I hope you all have gone through a similar mental exercise or even talked through your thoughts with a family member or friend.

One thing you will be asked to do this year in your classes, in your houses, and on your teams is to intentionally consider what we want this community to be. To articulate what we most value. More specifically, you will be asked -- how do we elevate as high as we can the best of the School? And how do we honestly, and without fear, confront and improve what we are not so proud of?

Don't be daunted by this work we will do together – it's actually what living together in community is all about. It is what healthy, strong communities do. It is what we do.

Finally, let me return to the three reflections I offered earlier. I offered them not as a multiple choice question. Who are you? Or who do you want to be? A. the authentic Mr. Chase, B. the seemingly duplicitous Facebook user, or C. the saintly Mr. Sokoloff? This wasn't my intention. My intention was to show you that each of these three examples lives in each of us. *All* of us. Our complexity and imperfections are what make us human. Similarly, our complexity and imperfections are what make us a real community, not a utopia.



I ask you to consider these two questions throughout the year: How do we support each other with compassion when we are not our best selves? And how do we celebrate each other when we *are* our best selves?

I am tremendously optimistic and excited about this year because I believe we can come close to answering these important questions through the way we live with one another. To be true to ourselves is what I'm asking, so that we can to be true to one another.

## **St. Paul's School Media Coverage**

We expect St. Paul's to be in the media again around the upcoming sentencing scheduled for October 29. We encourage all alumni to reference the Rector's webpage for school communications regarding the trial. [Rector's page »](#)



### **Building Community at St. Paul's School March 29, 2015**

#### **Community Safety**

Our tradition of community-based teaching and learning is predicated upon a safe and welcoming environment for all members of our community.

The School has an emergency management leadership team and plan in place and cooperates fully with public safety agencies (police, fire, ambulance, etc.). The team conducts school-wide safety drills and simulations on a regular basis and consults with experts to assure best practices.

#### **Current Concerns**

The Owen Labrie case is in the hands of the court and it would not be appropriate to comment on it. We take the well-being of every community member very seriously and value kindness and respect so that our students can learn and grow. Building on our foundational Living in Community (LINC) Curriculum, we have taken additional steps to assure a student culture and school environment that allows St. Paul's School to be the most robust and healthy school community it can be.

These include:



- **Challenge Days** for students using an experiential learning format to foster community and mutual respect.
- **Listening Forums** in a town meeting setting to facilitate dialogue between faculty and students.
- **Student-led workshops** that explored race and gender equality on MLK Day.
- **Faculty and Staff training** focused on adolescent development and how to work with students to build community.
  - Crisis expert Maria Trozzi: speaking constructively and frankly with students on sensitive issues.
  - Diversity speaker Rosetta Eun Ryong Lee: anti-bullying, cross-cultural competency, and bystander training.
  - Annual boundary training sessions for all SPS faculty and staff.
- **Invited Speakers** for faculty, students, and parents spoke on topics ranging from emotional health to bullying and harassment to healthy relationships.
  - Dr. Fred Luskin: compassion and the emotional health of children.
  - Author Katie Davis: adolescent identity, intimacy, and imagination in the digital age.
  - TED Talk: Al Vernacchio on healthy relationships.
  - Filmmaker and activist Byron Hurt: boys standing up to violence.
  - **Upcoming:** Chris Herren, Boston Celtics guard on substance abuse.
- **Administrative and Programming**
  - The Vice Rector for Residential Life, a new position, will oversee, coordinate, and align residential programming with the Dean of Students Office, the Medical Director/Clark House, and the Chaplaincy. (July 2015)
  - The Student Support Team (members from the Dean of Students Office and Clark House Health Center) are working with consultants to review current programming, policies, and procedures to assure sound and comprehensive prevention programming.

### **The Living in Community (LINC) Curriculum Provides the Basis for SPS Residential Life**

The St. Paul's School LINC program (established in 2012) provides ongoing opportunities for students and faculty to consider what it means to be part of an intentionally diverse and residential community. In addition, the LINC curriculum educates students and faculty about health and wellness.

- Third Form LINC classes meet once per week for the entire school year and help establish the habits and capacities that enable our newest students to reach their full potential in the years ahead.
- The Fourth Form LINC classes meet three days a week for one term and begin to explore the aspects of leadership.
- Fifth and Sixth Form students participate in activities, seminars and presentations that explore topics such as stress management and healthy relationships.

**The Chaplaincy and Clark House** counseling team are resources for the entire community.

### **Communications from the Rector**

- Chapel talks and communications about community are available at the School website: [sps.edu/rector](http://sps.edu/rector).
  - If you are having trouble viewing this email, [click here](#)



## ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL

June 10, 2015

Dear Parents,

During Anniversary Weekend and Graduation, at the Baccalaureate for the Form of 2015, Rev. Michael Spencer offered a moving blessing to the Sixth Form. Citing the words of a Leonard Cohen song, he described our essential human imperfections, “our cracks,” as opportunities for discernment and eventual growth. These cracks, Michael reminded us, is “how the light gets in.” It was a most appropriate blessing to conclude what has been a year of deep introspection and learning at the School. I am writing today to share with you some of what we saw and learned, knowing that our learning will continue.

Last July and August following the allegation of a sexual assault at the School, I wrote that we would use the incident as an opportunity to learn more about this community. As part of this process we learned that, independent of the charges against him, Owen Labrie engaged in behaviors that do not reflect the values of St. Paul's School. Consequently, I revoked the Rector's Award he had received in June 2014.

Last summer I also shared with you some of the planning and programming we undertook to provoke honest conversations about how we live together. This year our students and faculty experienced Challenge Day and met with Rosetta Lee, Dr. Fred Luskin, Al Vernacchio, Katie Davis, Byron Hurt and Chris Herren. While these speakers and programs varied in their content and specific messages, they were consistent in the theme of respect – for self and for others.

We were reminded this year, sometimes painfully, that living respectfully with one another is a value that needs to be continually taught and nurtured in this community – especially in times of crisis when emotions are high and opinions are polarized. Respect is, after all, the foundation of community – the foundation of the School. Specifically, we encountered issues this year, revealed in students' regular interactions with one another and increasingly, through social media, where unkind communication sometimes crossed over into disrespectful behavior. We are working to address this complex issue, which, among other dynamics, involves social hierarchy, the perceived anonymity of social media, and self-esteem.

Earlier this spring we engaged a visiting team of public health professionals who

specialize in the analysis of campus and community-based prevention programs to study our residential life program. Our visitors asked this question: Is the School doing enough in the areas of substance abuse, harassment, and relational violence prevention? The preliminary answer to their research question is that we are doing a lot, but we could be doing better within the structure of a more fully integrated plan. Dean of Students Chad Green, Director of Counseling Theresa Ferns, and Vice Rector for Residential Life Jada Hebra will be using this study to inform their planning and curriculum work this summer and throughout the coming year. I am very excited about the School's leadership in this area.

We have benefitted, and will continue to benefit, from "the light" provided to us from visiting experts, but the brightest light this year came from within the community. The faculty deserves much praise for helping our students navigate an extremely challenging year for this community. As challenging as it has been, this has been a pivotal year for the School. Introspection has not only fostered important conversations about the nature of our common life – its blessings, as well as its pitfalls – but importantly this introspection has prompted positive change, change that has been effected by our students.

Students have examined and questioned the "relationship culture" at St. Paul's School through their work with the Center for the Study of Boys' and Girls' Lives. The Student Council, under the leadership of the Sixth Form Officers, amended the Student Council Charter to forever ensure that both boys and girls will be represented each year as Sixth Form Officers. The Young Men's Club was founded this winter as a forum for boys to talk about their lives and relationships at the School. Similarly, the Young Women's Club was founded this year; its members will be introducing a non-violence pledge to the School community in the fall.

A student "think tank," Ingram Park, met in the fall and winter terms to discuss issues of diversity and inclusivity and wrote grant proposals, two of which were accepted and are in the process of implementation. Students who attended the National Association of Independent Schools' Student Diversity Leadership Conference in December, continued their work with weekly meetings designed to build a stronger multiracial SPS family. Another outgrowth from that conference is a new interfaith student group, COEXIST. In May, six students attended the inaugural Social Justice Leadership Institute at Phillips Andover Academy and are making plans for building an alliance with other SPS social justice clubs to receive training, raise awareness, and inspire positive change in the community.

Clearly, the 2014-15 school year was one of tremendous growth for all members of this

community. I am proud of this growth and of all the members of this special community. We confronted some of our cracks and benefitted from the light they let in. This work will continue. Such an enduring effort in community is, after all, the source of the School's most valuable teaching.

I wish you and your sons and daughters a joyous, restful and reflective summer.

Sincerely,



Mike Hirschfeld

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August 15, 2016

Dear SPS Community,

We have received a number of inquiries today about the media coverage concerning a recent pleading the School filed on August 11 in federal court in response to a motion made by plaintiffs for permission to use pseudonyms in court filings.

It appears the media has not read, or is not accurately reporting about our filing. We did not oppose the family's use of pseudonyms, and certainly did not request that the young woman's name be made public. Rather, we agreed to the family's use of pseudonyms during pretrial phases of the litigation, provided they agreed to stop improperly attacking the School's character in statements to the press. The point of the pleading was to suggest that the family's request to proceed anonymously should incorporate the School's desire for the matter to be handled responsibly in court and not through coordinated media attacks.

No one at the School has any desire or intention to reveal the identity of the young woman or her family. However, we have taken steps to ensure the case is fairly considered in court proceedings and not through media attacks.

The pleadings we filed strongly deny all claims that the School is somehow responsible for, or could have prevented, Owen Labrie's misconduct. While

it will be difficult for us to brief you on each development during the litigation, which may go on for some time, please be assured we intend, if necessary, to strongly defend the School in court, and we will not engage in efforts to try this case in the media.

I welcome your thoughts. Please feel free to contact me.

With best regards,



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